

REMARKS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for issuing the “supplemental action” addressing claim 10, as discussed with the Examiner by telephone on November 14, 2003. Applicants now request reconsideration of each of the rejected claims for the following reasons.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Kenmochi (U.S. Patent No. 5,664,667). For reasons stated below, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Regarding claim 10, Kenmochi does not teach that the metal treatment is provided *on the light emitting element side* of the shielding case, as required. The light reflecting layer (9) in Fig. 5 of Kenmochi was cited by the Examiner for teaching a shielding case that is provided with a metal surface treatment. In Kenmochi, the light reflecting layer (9) is formed on an upper side of a plastic dome sheet (7). In Fig. 5, two light sources or LEDs (5) are positioned in respective openings in the plastic dome sheet (7), extending above and below the plastic dome sheet (7). Thus, Kenmochi does not teach that the plastic dome sheet (7) has a “light emitting element side” as required by claim 10. By contrast, in the example of Fig. 3C. of the present application, only one side of the rib (21) faces the LED (22), and this “light emitting element side” is provided with a metal surface treatment or plating (25). Since the plastic dome sheet (7) does not have a side that can be considered a light emitting element side, Kenmochi does not teach that metal treatment is provided on the light emitting side of the shielding case as required by claim 10. Since every claim limitation is not taught by Kenmochi as required, claim 10 is patentable over the prior art of record.

For purposes of clarification of the teachings of Fig. 8 of Kenmochi, Applicants point out

that the lead line shown extending from reference character "8" erroneously points to the upper electrode (11). Reference character "8" designates an insulating resin sheet spacer (8). The specification describes: "an upper electrode 11 being arranged between the metal dome sheet 10 and the spacer 8," (column 5, lines 54-57). Thus, the lead line for the spacer (8) should point to the layer immediately below the upper electrode (11), since the metal dome sheet (10) is located immediately above the upper electrode (11). This interpretation is also consistent with the spacer (8) as shown in Figs. 4, 5, 7 and 9-11.

Regarding claims 1 and 6, Kenmochi does not teach that a light emitting element is surrounded entirely by a *rib provided with metal surface treatment*, the rib being disposed upright on a shielding case, as required. Applicants previously amended claims 1 and 6 to add the metal surface treatment limitation (see "Amendment 'A'" filed July 25, 2003). The Examiner maintains that the insulating resin sheet spacer (8) made of PET film as shown in Figs. 5 and 8 of Kenmochi teaches the rib of claims 1 and 6. However, the Examiner has not identified any teaching in Kenmochi of providing the spacer (8) with a metal surface treatment, as required by the present claims. Thus, since every claim limitation is not taught by Kenmochi as required, claims 1 and 6 are patentable over the prior art of record.

Regarding claim 2 and further regarding claims 1, 6 and 10, Kenmochi does not teach that a light emitting element is surrounded entirely by a rib, as required. There is no disclosure in the specification of Kenmochi that the spacer (8) (cited by the Examiner as the rib of claims 1, 6 and 10) *entirely* surrounds the light source (2). Further, even upon viewing the drawing figures, it is impossible to reach the conclusion that the spacer (8) *entirely* surrounds the light source (2), since no top view is provided. Thus, since for all of the above reasons every claim limitation is not

taught by Kenmochi as required, claims 1, 2, 6 and 10 are patentable over the prior art of record.

Regarding claim 4, Kenmochi does not teach that contact patterns are print-wired on *both sides* of a light emitting element, as required. In Fig. 5 of Kenmochi, fixed contacts (1a) are provided on the printed wiring board (1) to the left of the light source (2), but no contacts are provided on the right side of the light source (2). Therefore, in Kenmochi, contacts are provided on only one side of the light source, not on both sides as required by claim 4.

Further regarding claim 4, Kenmochi does not teach that a shielding case surrounds the contact patterns, as required. As previously noted, the light reflecting layer (9) was cited by the Examiner for teaching a shielding case. In Kenmochi, the light reflecting layer (9), and the plastic dome sheet (7) on which it is formed, do not surround the fixed contacts (1a), but instead are positioned above the fixed contacts (1a).

Thus, for all of the above reasons, since every claim limitation is not taught by Kenmochi as required, claim 4 and its dependent claim 5 are patentable over the prior art of record.

Claims 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Kenmochi in view of Maeda (U.S. Patent No. 5,740,543). For the following reasons, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Each of claims 7-9 depend from claim 6, and thus all of the limitations of claim 6 are incorporated by reference. For all of the reasons explained above with regard to claim 6, Kenmochi does not teach every limitation, as required. Maeda does not suggest modifying Kenmochi to include each of these above-mentioned deficiencies of Kenmochi. Thus, since every limitation of the claims is not taught or suggested by Kenmochi, Maeda or a combination thereof, claims 7-9 are patentable over the prior art of record.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kenmochi. For the

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following reasons, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 depends alternatively from claims 1 and 2, and thus all of the limitations of the respective base claim are incorporated by reference. For the reasons stated above with regard to each of claims 1 and 2, Kenmochi does not teach every limitation of the claim. Applicants respectfully submit that there is nothing in Kenmochi that suggests modifying its teachings to include the above-mentioned limitations of which it is deficient. Thus, since every limitation of the claim is not taught or suggested by Kenmochi, claim 3 is patentable over the prior art of record.

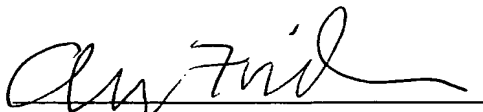
In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 33082.

Respectfully submitted,

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

By:


Aaron A. Fishman, Reg. No. 44682

1801 East 9th Street
Suite 1200
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3108
(216) 579-1700

Date:

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